NIGHTSHADE ODYSSEY PART 3
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The RETURN OF SHADE CHANGING man™
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EVE!
OPEN ONE OF YOUR DIMENSIONAL TUNNELS! GET US OUT OF HERE!
I'M ... NOT SURE... WHERE IT WILL LEAD!
I CAN'T PROMISE YOU I CAN FIND OUR WAY HOME!
ANYWHERE, Y'BLOODY GREAT CHROMO S'LONG AS IT AIN'T SPINNIN'!
I'LL ... I'LL TRY!
TZZZ TZZZ TZZZ VOMP!
BLOODY HELL! I'M GONNER...
=RAAAAALFFFF!=

TOO TOO TOO
VOOMP!!
THERE. BEST...I COULD DO...!
EVE!
OUT LIKE A LIGHT... BREATHING OKAY... I DON'T KNOW WHAT HOUSING THAT SUCCUBUS IS DOING TO HER, THO.
GOT OTHER PROBLEMS. TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
OH YES. OH LOVELY. OH THIS IS SO MUCH BETTER, I'M SURE!
'STREWTH!
TAO!
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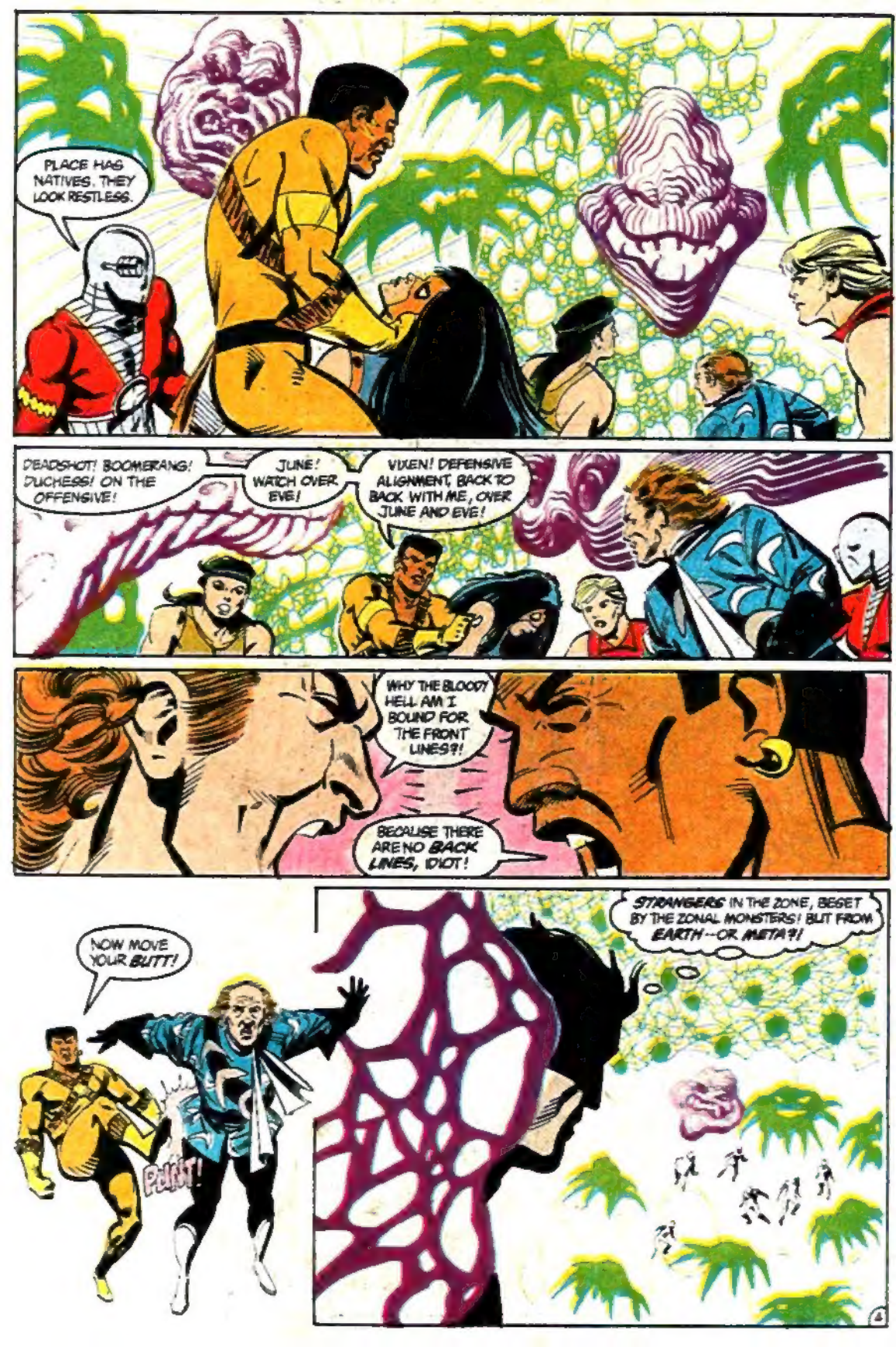
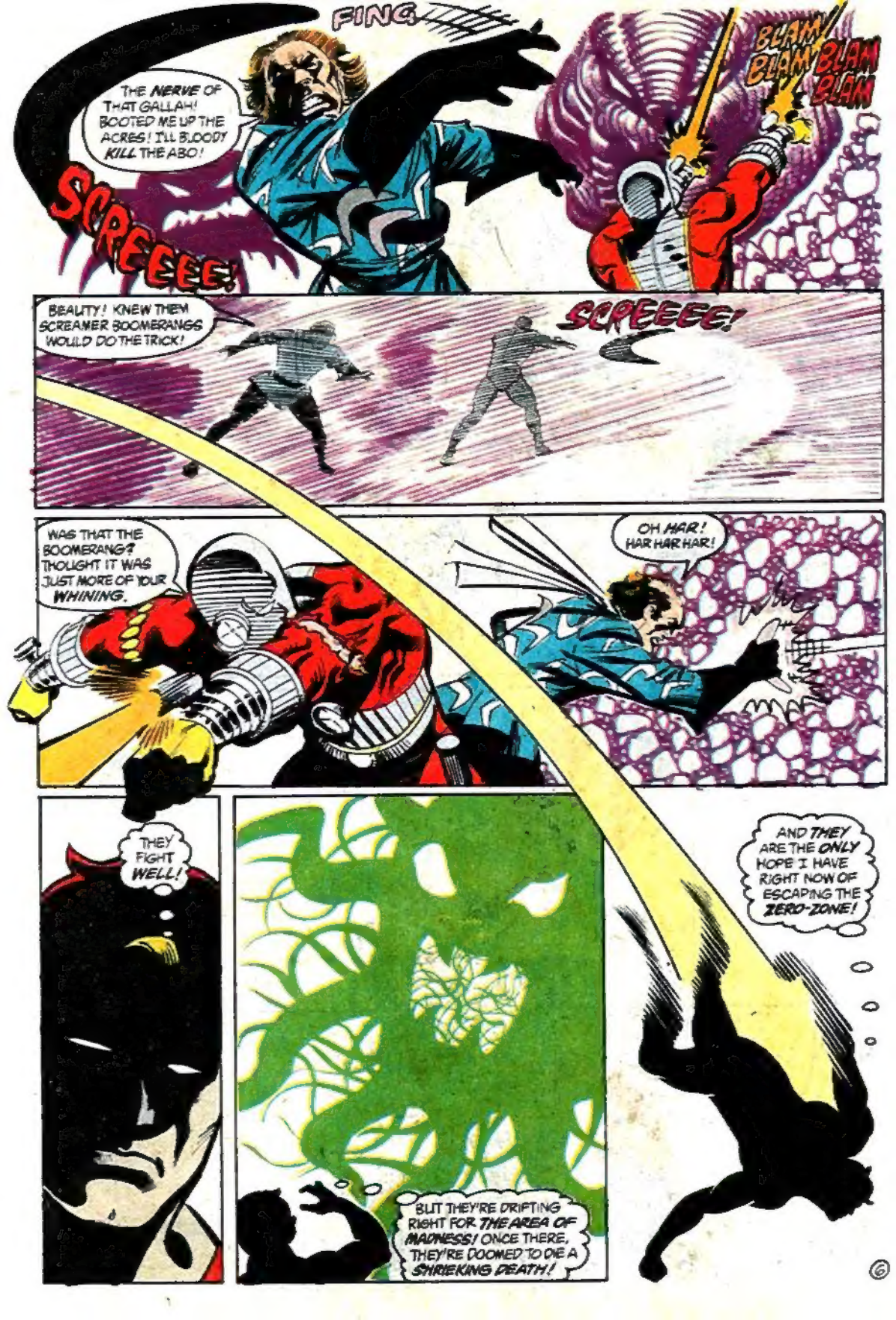

PLACE HAS NATIVES. THEY LOOK RESTLESS.
DEADSHOT! BOOMERANG! DUCHESS! ON THE OFFENSIVE!
JUNE! WATCH OVER EVE!
VIXEN! DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT, BACK TO BACK WITH ME, OVER JUNE AND EVE!
WHY THE BLOOD? HELL AM I BOUND FOR THE FRONT LINES?!
BECAUSE THERE ARE NO BACK LINES, IDIOT!
NOW MOVE YOUR BUTT!
PUNT!
STRANGERS IN THE ZONE, BEGET BY THE ZONAL MONSTERS! BUT FROM EARTH--OR META?!

BDOW BDOW BDOW BDOW!
BDOW!
INTERESTING!
UNTIL WE KNOW WHERE WE ARE, I'D JUST AS SOON NOT INVOKE THE TANTU TOTEM. MAGICAL LOCALES SEEM TO HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON MY POWERS LATELY.*
*LAST ISSUE, --BOB
THAT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU HAVE A PERFECTLY ADEQUATE FIGHTING STYLE WITHOUT THE POWERS.
FLATTERER!
AND WHAT HAVE I WITHOUT MY POWERS? NOTHING! I'M USELESS!
I DREAMED OF BEING RID OF THE ENCHANTRESS! AND NOW THAT I AM-- I CAN ONLY THINK OF GETTING HER BACK!


FING
THE NERVE OF THAT GALLAH! BOOTED ME UP THE ACRES! I'LL BLOODY KILL THE ABO!
SCREEEE!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
BEAUTY! KNEW THEM SCREAMER BOOMERANGS WOULD DO THE TRICK!
SCREEEE!
WAS THAT THE BOOMERANG? THOUGHT IT WAS JUST MORE OF YOUR WHINING.
OH HAR! HAR HAR HAR!
THEY FIGHT WELL!
BUT THEY'RE DRIFTING RIGHT FOR THE AREA OF MADNESS! ONCE THERE, THEY'RE DOOMED TO DIE A SHRIEKING DEATH!
AND THEY ARE THE ONLY HOPE I HAVE RIGHT NOW OF ESCAPING THE ZERO-ZONE!

STREWTH!
THAT'S IT, MATES. KISS YER ACRES G'BYE.
TAO! WHAT IS THAT?
THE WAY HIS BODY KEEPS CHANGING...!
BLOODY HELL! HE'S TAKEN OUT THE WHOLE MOB!

IS HE COMING FOR US?

WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. ARE YOU FROM META OR THE EARTH-ZONE?
EARTH-ZONE?
YES, WE'RE FROM EARTH. ARE YOU A FRIEND?

IF I WASN'T, THERE'D BE NOTHING YOU COULD DO ABOUT IT.
SEE YOU!
CARE TO EXPLAIN WHO YOU ARE--WHERE WE ARE--?

YES, I WOULD. WE'RE ALL IN THE GRIP OF THE AREA OF MADNESS, AND IF WE ENTER IT, YOU'RE ALL SURE TO DIE OF THE SCREAMING MADNESS.

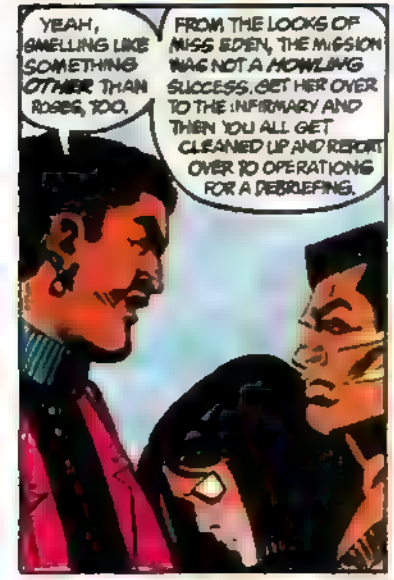
NOT YOU, OF COURSE.
NO, I'VE BEEN THERE, TWICE.
HOW DID YOU TELEPORT INTO THE ZERO-ZONE?

WELL, I'VE GOT US HERE BUT I THINK SHE'S IN A COMA RIGHT NOW. SHE CAN'T GET US HOME!

IT'S ALL RIGHT! THE VEST CAN READ ENOUGH FROM HER TO GET THE VIBRATIONAL FREQUENCY!
THE REST OF YOU! LINK PHYSICALLY AND COME IN CONTACT WITH ME!
WHO DIED AND MADE YOU BOSS COCKY? THAT'S WHAT I WANTS T' KNOW!
THEN DON'T. STAY HERE. GOOD-BYE.
HANG ON A MINUTE!
THE VEST HAS READ THE FREQUENCY! WE'RE ATTUNED! HOLD ON!
WE'RE GONE!

BELLE RIVE
WELL, PAT LADY? YOU *DONE* FEELING SORRY FOR Y'SELF?
SO YOU UP AGAINST IT. SO *WHAT*? AIN'T THE FIRST TIME AND AIN'T THE *WORST*.
YOU SLAPPED DOWN THAT SCUM-BAG TOLLIVER AND WHAT'D *ME* DO? PUT YOU BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL IN *FINE* FASHION.
EITHER THE SQUAD HELPS THAT CROOKED SENATOR *CRADY* GET RE-ELECTED OR HE TELLS ALL TOLLIVER TOLD *HIM* ABOUT US, AND THE PREZ DON'T WANT US *SPOILING* HIS PLACE IN HISTORY.
SO I COOPERATE OR I AM *HISTORY* SO FAR AS THE SQUAD IS CONCERNED, AND *TOLLIVER* GETS PUT IN MY PLACE!
SO--IS TOLLIVER *SMARTER*--*TOUGHER*--*BADDER* THAN *YOU*, GIRL?
I DIDN'T *THINK* SO.
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON OUT IN THE *OPERATIONS ROOM*?
FRASH!
FLO, JUST *WHAT* IS *GOING ON* HERE?!

OH! UH...
WELL, THE SQUAD'S RETURNED FROM ITS MISSION.


YEAH, SMELLING LIKE SOMETHING OTHER THAN ROSES, TOO.
FROM THE LOOKS OF MISS EDEN, THE MISSION WAS NOT A HOWLING SUCCESS. GET HER OVER TO THE INFIRMARY AND THEN YOU ALL GET CLEANED UP AND REPORT OVER TO OPERATIONS FOR A DEBRIEFING.

I HAVEN'T TIME TO TALK!
HE NEW?
PICKED HIM UP EN ROUTE. GOT US HOME

THERE'S A CHANGE COME BACK WITH ONE MORE THAN WHEN YOU'VE LEFT.
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, BIG RED! WANT TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF?
NO. I HAVEN'T THE TIME TO WASTE WITH YOU AND YOU HAVEN'T THE POWER TO KEEP ME.

MAYBE NOT BUT I SURE CAN MAKE YOUR LIFE DIFFICULT.
BELIEVE HER, MATE! SHE'S GOT LOTS OF PRACTICE AT THAT!
SHUT UP, BOOMERBUTT.

THE FATE OF YOUR WORLD MAY HINGE ON THE SUCCESS OF MY MISSION.
SINCE IT IS OUR WORLD, WE'D LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT IT

MISSIONS ROOM. ONE HALF HOUR
END OF DISCUSSION.

A SHOWER, A SHAVE, AND A DEBRIEFING LATER...

SO ENCHANTRESS IS GONE AND NIGHTSHADE'S IN A COMA AND HER BROTHER'S DEAD. LOVELY.

YOU GOT A NAME AND A REASON FOR LIVING, RED?

MY NAME IS ***RAC SHADE***, ALTHOUGH LAST TIME I WAS IN YOUR ZONE SOME KNEW ME AS THE ***CHANGING MAN***.

I'VE TRIED TO SIMPLIFY THIS SO YOU CAN GRASP IT.

THIS SHOWS THE THREE ***ZONES*** OR ***DIMENSIONS***, AS YOU MIGHT CALL THEM.

I'M FROM THE META-ZONE, YOU'RE FROM THE EARTH-ZONE, AND THE AREA IN BETWEEN IS CALLED THE ZERO-ZONE. WITH ME SO FAR?

META

ZERO ZONE

EARTH

YER A COP, AIN'TCHA?

I'M A SECURITY OFFICER, YES. BUT HOW'D ***YOU***...?

COPS IS COPS, NO MATTER WHAT "ZONE" THEY'RE FROM, PAL.

AH, LENNY, ME OLD CHUM*! YOU ALWAYS ***COULD*** SNIFF OUT A DEMON RIGHT OFF!

*LEONARD SNART, BETTER KNOWN TO US ALL AS CAPTAIN COLD. -- BOB

AND YOU TWO ARE OBVIOUSLY CRIMINALS. PROBABLY INCORRIGIBLE. DO YOU KNOW HOW ***MY*** PEOPLE HANDLE THE HARDENED CRIMINAL?

WE ***NEGATE*** THEM.

YEAH? WHAT'S THAT...SOME SORT OF ***SHOCK THERAPY***, EH?

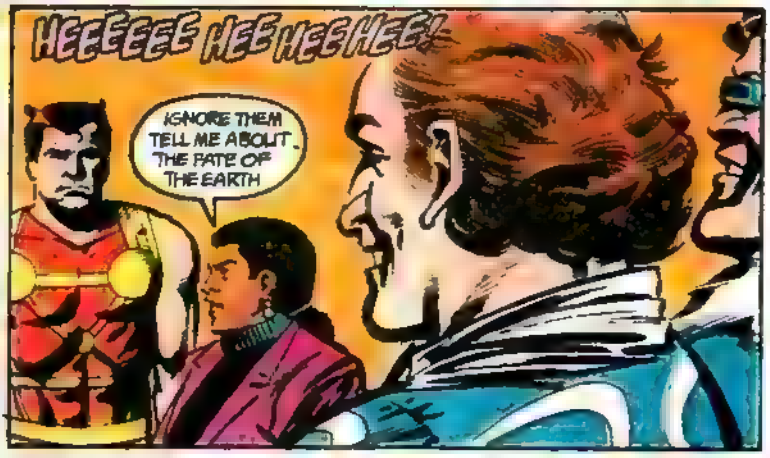
'N A WAY.

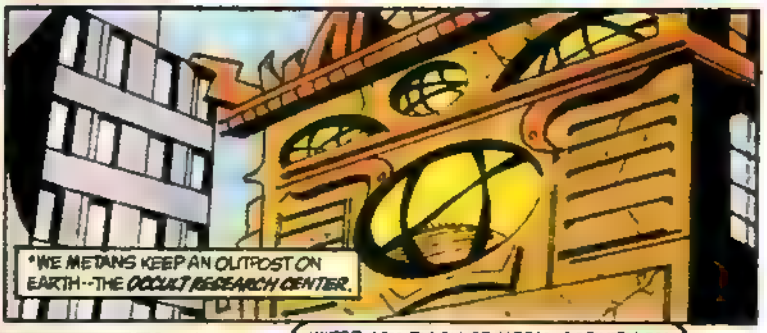
WE KILL THEM.

I SUPPOSE ALL METANS CAN PULL THAT DISTORTION STUFF YOU DO.
NO. THOSE ARE ACTUALLY CAUSED BY THE M-VEST-- THE MIRACO VEST-- THAT I WEAR.
ITS FORCE FIELD REPELS WEAPONRY, ALLOWS A DEGREE OF FLIGHT AND DISTORTS MY APPEARANCE, DEPENDING ON THE VIEWER'S MENTAL STATE. OR MY OWN, SOMETIMES.
UH-HUH. AND THESE M-VESTS ARE STANDARD ISSUE TO METAN SECURITY FORCES.
NO IT'S AN EXPERIMENTAL VEST. ITS FULL ABILITIES AREN'T EVEN KNOWN YET.
UH-HUH. SO THEY CHOSE YOU AS THE GUINEA PIG TO TEST IT.
NO! THE VEST WAS STOLEN. I RECOVERED IT BUT I KEPT IT RATHER THAN TURN IT IN BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID IT WOULD BE HIJACKED AGAIN!
THE GANG WHO STOLE IT OBVIOUSLY HAD INSIDE HELP
UH-HUH. SO YOU DECIDED TO USE THE VEST TO HELP YOU TRACK DOWN WHO STOLE IT
NO! I FIRST USED THE VEST TO HELP ME FIND THE MEN WHO FRAMED ME FOR TREASON AND MURDER!
AH-HAH. I GET IT NOW!
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A METAN CROOK.

NO!!! I TOLD YOU I WAS FRAMED! I'M INNOCENT!

SO WERE WE, PAL! SO'S EVERYBODY IN JAIL!!
BWA-HA-HA! HOO-HOO!

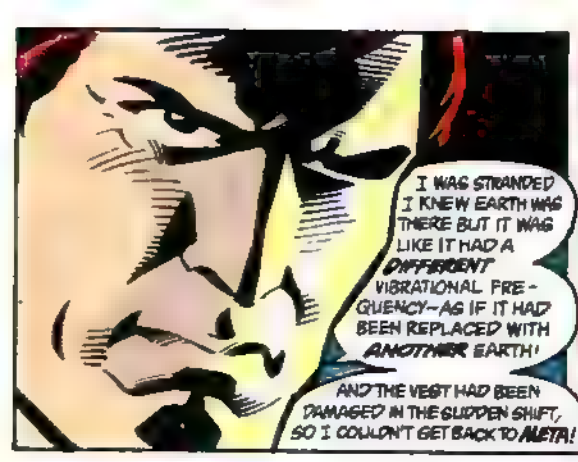

HEEEEEE HEE HEE HEE!
IGNORE THEM TELL ME ABOUT THE FATE OF THE EARTH

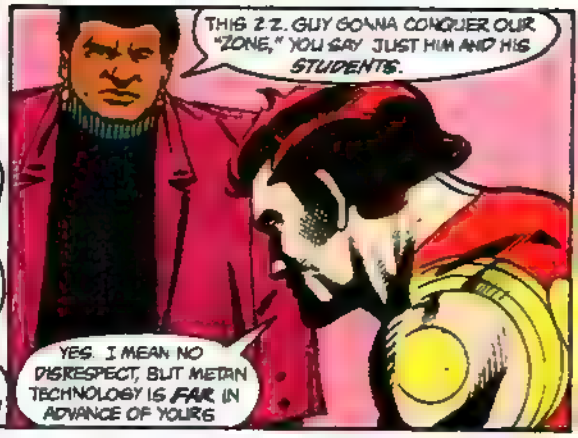

*WE METANS KEEP AN OUTPOST ON EARTH--THE OCCULT RESEARCH CENTER.

THE CHIEF OPERATIVE IS A METAN CODE-NAMED WIZOR. HIS CHIEF ASSISTANT IS A ONE-EYED MAN I KNOW ONLY AS LENO.

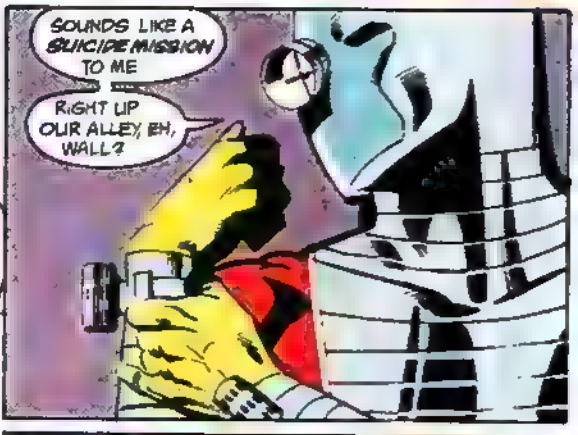
WIZOR CAN DISGUISE METAN ACTIVITY ON EARTH BY TELLING THE TRUTH AND YOUR MEDIA LAUGH IT ALL OFF BECAUSE IT COMES FROM ORC.
BLIND THEM WITH THE TRUTH, EH? INTERESTING TECHNIQUE!

"THE ORC HAS BEEN TAKEN OVER BY DR. Z.Z.--A METAN RENEGADE -- ALONG WITH HIS STUDENTS OF CRIME. HE PLANS TO INFILTRATE YOUR ZONE AND BUILD A POWER BASE WITH WHICH TO CONQUER IT--AND ULTIMATELY, META!
"DR. Z.Z. TOOK THE PRECAUTION OF BLOWING ALL THE TRANSPORTERS BETWEEN THE TWO ZONES, CUTTING ORC OFF FROM META.
"PRESIDENT OLON OF META HAS SECRETLY PROMISED ME A NEW TRIAL WITH WHICH TO CLEAR MY NAME IF I USED THE M-VEST TO GET TO EARTH AND STOP Z.Z.
"BUT WHILE I WAS IN THE ZERO-ZONE, THERE WAS A SUDDEN, INEXPLICABLE PHASE SPASM!
"THE NEXT THING I KNEW I WAS ON EARTH, BATTLING SIDE BY SIDE WITH SOME OF EARTH'S HEROES AGAINST THESE WEIRD SHADOW-CREATURES!*
*AS SEEN IN CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS --BOB
"THEN SUDDENLY I WAS WRENCHED BACK TO THE ZERO-ZONE AS THE M-VEST SCREAMED!"
15

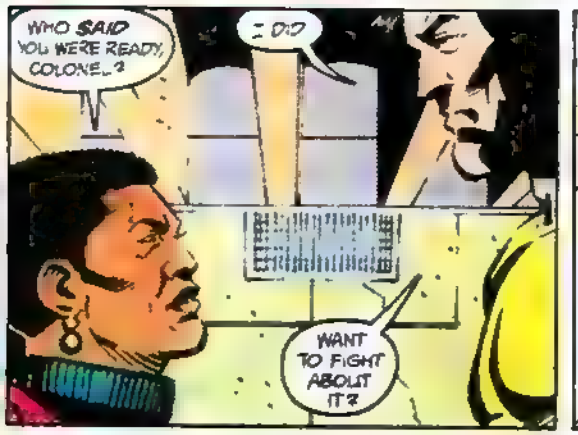

I WAS STRANDED I KNEW EARTH WAS THERE BUT IT WAS LIKE IT HAD A DIFFERENT VIBRATIONAL FREQUENCY--AS IF IT HAD BEEN REPLACED WITH ANOTHER EARTH!
AND THE VEST HAD BEEN DAMAGED IN THE SUDDEN SHIFT, SO I COULDN'T GET BACK TO ALETA!


THIS Z Z. GUY GONNA CONQUER OUR "ZONE," YOU SAY JUST HIM AND HIS STUDENTS.
YES. I MEAN NO DISRESPECT, BUT METAN TECHNOLOGY IS FAR IN ADVANCE OF YOURS

I DO KNOW SOMETHING OF YOUR ZONE, YOU SEE, AND THERE'S NOT A DOUBT IN MY MIND HE CAN DO IT.
I HAVE TO STOP HIM.
THE PROBLEM IS--I'M STILL OFFICIALLY A WANTED MAN WIZOR AND HIS AGENTS WOULD BE FULLY JUSTIFIED IN NEGATING ME ON THE SPOT, EVEN IF I BEAT DR Z.Z.


SOUNDS LIKE A SUICIDE MISSION TO ME
RIGHT UP OUR ALLEY, EH, WALL?

MAYBE
AND IT'S MRS. WALLER, DEADHEAD.
I'M READY.

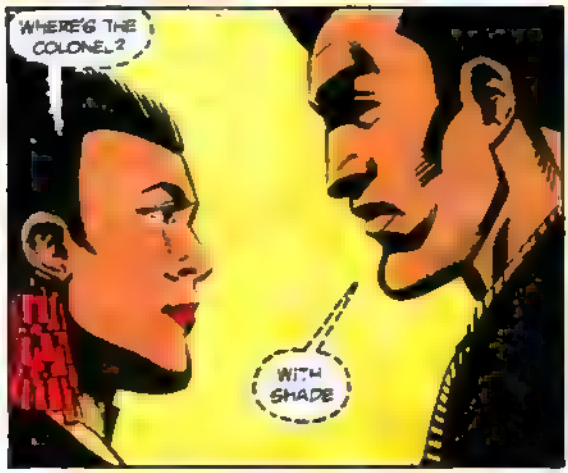

WHO SAID YOU WERE READY, COLONEL?
I DID
WANT TO FIGHT ABOUT IT?

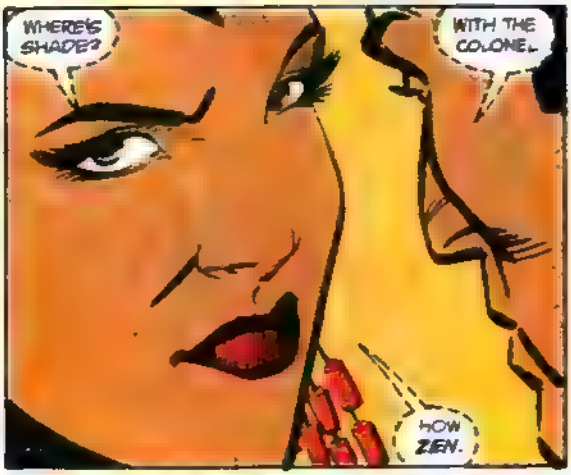
YEAH, YOU'RE READY.
ROLL 'EM OUT, COLONEL... I GOT WORK TO DO

A FEW HOURS LATER...
WELL, WIZOR? ANY MORE HIDDEN AGENTS IN THE WOODWORK?
NO! NO! PLEASE-- DON'T TORTURE HIM ANYMORE! HE WAS THE LAST!
MY LAST HOPE!
DON'T LIKE THIS WORKING WITHOUT THE COSTUME. IT DON'T FEEL RIGHT
ERIK LARSON'S FAR SIDE OF SCIENCE
NO WORRIES. WHEN THE FUN STARTS, YOU CAN THROW THE HOOD UP. LISTEN, YOU EVER HEAR FROM ANY OF THE OL' MOB?
THE ROGUES' GALLERY? NAH.
ARE THESE SUPPOSED T'BE FUNNY? I DON'T GET 'EM.
HEAR ABOUT THIS NEW MIRROR MASTER?
YEAH. DAMN GRAVE-ROBBER. IF I EVER CATCH UP TO TH' JERK, HE'S DEAD MEAT.
"FRENCH MAMMOTH." I DON'T GET IT!

HOW DO WE KNOW WHO TO SHOOT?
PICK A TARGET... HEADING IN WHEN EVERYTHING BLOWS.

WHEN DO WE GO?
WHEN THE COLONEL GIVES THE WORD YOU KNOW. THESE CARTOONS ARE VERY ZEN.


WHERE'S THE COLONEL?
WITH SHADE


WHERE'S SHADE?
WITH THE COLONEL.
HOW ZEN.

MY STUDENTS MINGLE PERFECTLY WITH THE EARTHERS! OUR INFIL-TRATION CAN NOW BEGIN!
THAT'S HIM.

GO

EMPLOYEES
BAM!

EMPLOYEES
NOW WE KNOW WHO'S WHO.

BRAM!

SHADE?! HERE?!

SCHOOL'S OUT, KIDDIES.

NONSENSE, CAPTAIN! TIME THEY WAS TAUGHT THE FACTS O' LIFE!
DON'T MESS WITH YER BETTERS!

IF YER GONNA SHOOT, SHOOT. DON'T TALK.
BLAM! BLAM!
BDOW! CHOW!

BOOM!
TZAKK!

FORCE THEM BACK! DON'T LET THEM USE THE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR NUMBERS!
WONDER HOW THE COLONEL'S DOING?

SURRENDER, Z.Z.! OR I'LL BE FORCED TO NEGATE YOU!

WHY? YOU'RE AS MUCH A CRIMINAL AS I, SHADE!

YOUR ATTACK MAKES YOU AS MUCH MY ENEMY AS WIZOR! DIE, SHADE!

AGH! THIS ISN'T DOING MY RIB CAGE ANY GOOD!
LET'S CUT THIS SHORT.
BRAAAP!
BAM!
SHOULDN'T...HAVE KILLED Z Z...FLAG! WAS...MY MAN!
WE'LL ARGUE JURISDICTION LATER.
GOT TO SEE HOW THE SQUAD'S DOING!
RAC SHADE! BY AUTHORITY OF META, I TAKE YOU BACK INTO CUSTODY!
NOT A CHANCE. HE'S COMING WITH ME.
HERE'S MY AUTHORITY.
YOU GOT ENOUGH POWER TO CRACK THE ICE?
DON'T BE INSULTING.

NEXT: THE RETURN OF THE